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MY

FRIEND ISAAC:

AN ORIGINAL COMEDIETTA,

In One Act.

BY

DANIEL K. FORD.

WITH THE

STAGE-BUSINESS, COSTUMES, PROPERTIES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c., &c.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,
22, School Street.
1859.

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AN ORIGINAL COMEDIETTA,

In One Act.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859,

BY DANIEL K. FORD,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

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34

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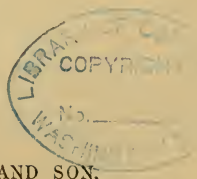

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MY FRIEND ISAAC.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ AND COSTUMES.

ISAAC H. PETTIGREW. — Rich dressing-gown, dark frock coat, buff waistcoat, gray trousers, and straw hat.

JACOB L. STANFORD. — Light frock coat, white waistcoat, and black trousers.

JOHN. — A combination of cast-off garments. (*Not ragged.*)

MRS. PETTIGREW. — Morning walking-dress, fashionable bonnet, and crape shawl.

MRS. STANFORD. — Handsome silk dress, fashionable bonnet, shawl, &c.

PROPERTIES.

SCENE I. — Green cloth down. — Escritoire (L.), on which there are pens, ink, and unfinished manuscript. — Sofa (R.). — Table, with books and bell (C.). — Four chairs. — Sewing for Mrs. Pettigrew. — Mrs. Pettigrew's bonnet and shawl, and Mr. Pettigrew's hat and frock coat, in closet left of C.D. — Bouquet. — Prodigious sweet potato.

SCENE III. — Handsome table (R.), on which, backgammon board and fan. — Two high-backed chairs, one right, the other left, of this table. — Easy-chair (C.). — Two more high-backed chairs. — Handsome sofa (L.). — Two letters for John. — Red silk handkerchief for Mr. Stanford.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Exits and Entrances.

R. means right; L., left; R.D., right door; L.D., left door; C.D., centre door; 2 E.R., second entrance, right; 2 E.L., second entrance, left; 3 E.R., third entrance, right; 3 E.L., third entrance, left.

Relative Positions.

R. means right; L., left; C., centre; R.C., right of centre; L.C., left of centre; R COR., right corner; L. COR., left corner.

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MY FRIEND ISAAC.

SCENE I.

A very neat, though not extravagantly furnished room, in the house of Mr. PETTIGREW. — *Door in flat* (C.). — *Closet left of door.* — *Escritoire, with pens, ink, paper, and unfinished manuscript* (L.). — *Sofa* (R.). — *Table, with a few books and a bell* (C.). — *Chairs, &c., about stage.* — *Mr.* PETTIGREW *discovered writing at the escritoire.* — *Mrs.* PETTIGREW *seated on sofa, sewing.* — *Mr.* P. *has on dressing-gown.*

Mrs. P. I can't imagine what keeps Nellie. She promised to be here at ten o'clock. (*Looks at watch.*) Why, it is now past eleven. Isaac, Isaac, my dear!

Mr. P. (*Correcting manuscript.*) Six mistakes in one sentence. (*Furiously blots out a line.*)

Mrs. P. Ah me! The poor fellow really doesn't hear me. Thank fortune, he has nearly completed his "Economical Agriculturist;" for he has neither allowed himself nor me to enjoy a good night's rest, since the moment that Quixotic idea which inspired him to be an author entered his dear, devoted head.

Mr. P. (*Angrily.*) Cabbage begun with a K. The idea of a —— (*Furiously blots out a word.*)

Mrs. P. During the day, he does nothing but scratch, scratch, scratch; and, when night comes on and we should be quietly asleep, he torments me almost to death by descanting upon the merits of the few additional pages which have recently augmented his large compilation of receipts.

Mr. P. (*In better humor.*) This page looks better.

Mrs. P. If, finally, he falls asleep, and I have made up my mind that I shall be able to enjoy a few hours' repose, I hardly fall into a comfortable snooze when I am awakened

by his voice, crying, "Get off that bed of turnips," or a vociferous recital of one of the receipts which he has lately transcribed. O dear! O dear! If this book was not almost completed, I believe I should tolerate such proceedings no longer. Isaac!

Mr. P. (*Writing at the same time.*) Did — you — speak, — Carrie?

Mrs. P. Did I speak? I spoke twice.

Mr. P. What — say, — Carrie? (*Aside.*) If I can but surmount this last of all my difficulties, this last great task, I shall immortalize my name; yes, immortalize it. The name of Pettigrew shall, through the pen of the biographer, be placed beside those of Plato, Plutarch, Pericles, Pompey, Pitt; in short, Pettigrew will be another P. added to this illustrious pod. (*Resumes writing.*)

Mrs. P. Husband!

Mr. P. O Carrie! I think you spoke to me. You must excuse me, my dear. I was endeavoring to think of some elixir, balm, or lotion, which, on experiment, might possibly prove to be a new and economical cure for the potato rot. It is high time that this unfortunate esculent plant received my attention. Can't you make some suggestions, my love? for, you know, you are my love, my sweet. (*Crosses* C.) Apropos, speaking of sweets, I am confident that I shall receive the first premium for long sweets at the coming horticultural fair.

Mrs. P. Indeed! I am delighted to hear this joyful news.

Mr. P. Thank you, my dear. I should now be the happiest of mortals if I could but discover a practical receipt for ——

Mrs. Stanford. (*Back of flat.*) Oh! I can find the room.

Mrs. P. 'Tis Mrs. Stanford.

Enter Mrs. STANFORD (C.D.). *Mr.* P. *retires to table, and arranges papers.*

Mrs. P. (*Rising from sofa.*) Good morning, Nellie.

Mrs. S. (*Coming down* C.) Good morning, Carrie. As I came on urgent business, you must excuse me for entering so abruptly. I ——

Mrs. P. Hush! (*Points to Mr.* PETTIGREW.)

Mrs. S. Ah! Mr. Pettigrew, I did not observe you when I entered. Lovely morning.

Mr. P. Yes, charming, madam, charming. (*Aside.*) Probably she did *not* observe me. She said she came on urgent business. *Urgent* business, a lawyer's wife, and urgent business. (*Ponders.*)

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) Now to get rid of Isaac: let me see. (*Aloud.*) Isaac, Isaac, my dear, please go into the garden, and cut Nellie a bouquet? and go *immediately, too,* if you please, for she can only stay a short time; and be sure, Isaac, to place some of the Pettigrew roses in it.

Mr. P. (*Aside, suspiciously.*) Oho! I think there's some conspiracy on foot. (*Takes bell from table,* C.) I'll ring for John.

Mrs. P. (*Very lovingly.*) No, no: please bring it yourself; it will be arranged so much better.

Mr. P. (*Aside.*) How can I refuse such a lovely creature! (*Aloud, going to* C.D.) Very well, Carrie, as you like. (*Aside, at* C.D.) Urgent business. (*Takes hat and coat from closet; hangs up dressing-gown.*) To be sure, my premium from Norton comes to me, *probably,* through the kindness of Mrs. Stanford. She is a very agreeable woman; but she — I — I — if — is it proper or right, Isaac Pettigrew, that you should leave these two women by themselves, during the time which it requires, on ordinary occasions, to cut and arrange a bouquet? No, never! I am resolved. The bouquet in the hall, with a few fresh roses, will answer every purpose. O Carrie! beware! 'Tis dangerous to have urgent business with lawyers' wives. (*Exit,* C.D.)

Mrs. S. (R.C.) Well, Carrie, here we are, all alone.

Mrs. P. (*Placing chairs.*) Yes, Nellie: be seated. We will immediately see what can be done. (*Mrs.* S. *sits,* R.C. *Mrs.* P. *sits,* C.) It is necessary that we should be as expeditious as possible.

Mrs. S. Ah, me!

Mrs. P. Why that sigh? Has any thing new occurred? Why didn't you come at the time agreed upon? But never mind: you are here, and I propose to use Isaac to accomplish our design.

Mrs. S. (*Alarmed.*) What, Mr. Pettigrew! Why, you have not informed Mr. ——? Fie, Carrie, fie!

Mrs. P. Do not be alarmed, my dear. I have not informed my husband; but, as I said before, I propose using him to accomplish our purpose.

Mr. S. But how? You ——

Mrs. P. (*Interrupting.*) Patience, Nellie, and you will understand. Do you remember a certain interview which you had not long ago with Mr. Squashby, President of the Horticultural Association at Norton?

Mrs. S. Yes, indeed, I do; and a good word for Mr. Pettigrew I did not forget during our conversation.

Mrs. P. Well, Isaac has heard of your kindness to him; and he feels confident, that, through that good word, as you say, —— (Of course I would not disparage the merits of his productions.)

Mrs. S. Oh, no!

Mrs. P. Certainly not; but he feels confident that through your kindness those merits were more thoroughly appreciated.

Mrs. S. Yes, and is he to receive a premium?

Mrs. P. He informed me, a few minutes before you entered the room, that there was no doubt of it.

Mrs. S. That is capital. Then his monomania will be turned to some account. Go on, Carrie. But what has all this to do with his aiding us in our plans?

Mrs. P. You shall see, you shall see. 'Twas only yesterday that he spoke of his gratitude to you; and he added, he would do any thing in the world to repay you for your kindness.

Mrs. S. Yes, well!

Mrs. P. I intend to remind him of the remark he made yesterday, and to inform him that there is now an opportunity for him to verify it.

Mrs. S. Exactly; but how?

Mrs. P. By becoming enamoured — *seemingly*, of course, not really — with Mrs. Stanford.

Mrs. S. (*Laughing.*) What! with *me*, Carrie?

Mrs. P. Yes, with you; and, by so doing, excite the jealousy of your husband, open his eyes, and cause him to realize the enormity of his conduct.

Mrs. S. Excellent! But will Mr. Pettigrew consent?

Mrs. P. I feel assured he will; and my assurance is enhanced by a proposition which I have got to make him.

Mrs. S. (*Laughing.*) O Carrie!

Mrs. P. You have heard him speak of his forthcoming work, entitled (*loftily*) "The Economical Agriculturist"?

Mrs. S. I have.

Mrs. P. Well, it was almost completed three weeks ago;

and, since that time, it has remained in a state of *statu quo*, requiring but one more article before it should go into the hands of the publishers. This morning, our neighbor, farmer Norcross, informed me that he had discovered the very thing Mr. Pettigrew has been pining for during three long weeks. He wrote it off for me, and I now have it here in my pocket. Now, my dear, I intend to offer Isaac this receipt as a reward, if he will consent, for a few hours only, to do as we may direct him.

Mrs. S. Capital! He *will* consent. I am *sure* he will.

Mrs. P. Now, as soon as he returns, take the bouquet, and go directly home. I will be there in a short time, and —— (*noise back of flat*); but here he comes. It can't be possible that he has already picked the bouquet. (*They place back the chairs.*)

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW (C.D.), *apparently unobserved.*

Mr. P. (*Standing in* C.D.) There, I guess they have not had time to concoct much mischief. This bouquet has been picked at least twenty-four hours; but, by the addition of a few Pettigrew roses, and the application of a few drops of Lubin's extract, its appearance is so integrally changed, both in an olfactory and ocular sense, that I think I may safely venture to pass it off for a fresh one. (*Goes down left of Mrs.* S.) There, Mrs. Stanford, behold the bouquet, all plucked, arranged, and presented, in (*presents it with right hand, and takes out watch with left*) just ten minutes. (*Feels in back pocket to coat, and partially turns his back on Mrs.* S.

Mrs. S. Thank you, Mr. Pettigrew. (*Glances roguishly at Mrs.* P.) (*Exit*, R.)

Mr. P. (*Still feeling in pocket.*) But that is not all I have brought you. (*Tugs at pocket.*) In one minute, — there (*produces large sweet potato*), there is one of my long sweets, which, if you have no objections, I would like to have you try to-day at dinner. (*Turns full round, and is astonished not to find Mrs.* STANFORD.) Well! This is refreshing, I must say. Where is Mrs. Stanford?

Mrs. P. (L.C.) Gone home, my dear.

Mr. P. (*Indignantly.*) What, without even saying good morning? I must say Mrs. Stanford does not know what good manners are, if she did confer a favor on me. Why, she is a perfect pig. She, — pig? — pig? — speaking of pigs

reminds me that I have forgotten to tell John to crop old Suffolk's ears. (*Places potato back into pocket.*) I will call him immediately. (*Takes bell from table.*)

Mrs. P. Don't ring. John has gone to town on an errand for me.

Mr. P. (*Petulantly.*) Just the way, just the way. (*Pleasantly.*) No matter, no matter. I can never blame you, Carrie, for any thing. I am sorry, but I will go and cut them myself. (*Advances towards* C.D.)

Mrs. P. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Isaac Pettigrew cut a pig's ears? Why, you would be on your back in less than a minute; and I am much afraid, that, instead of piggy Suffolk, it would be piggy Pettigrew whose ears would be cropped.

Mr. P. (*Very much excited.*) Mrs. Pettigrew! Mrs. Pettigrew! *Call your husband a pig!* O Carrie, Carrie! has it come to this? (*Buries face in hands, and walks down to* R. COR. *Turns abruptly.*) But who will cut his ears? You can't do it, — that — is — I can't, — you are not willing I should do it. The pig's ears must be cut. Yes, Mrs. P., the pig's ears must and *shall* be cut. Who? yes, who in the d—— is going to do it, Mrs. P.?

Mrs. P. (*Lovingly.*) Now, Isaac.

Mr. P. (*Peevishly.*) What?

Mrs. P. I have got some good news to tell you.

Mr. P. Good news! hang the good news.

Mrs. P. You will not say so when you hear me through. If you will only follow my advice, you will be able to finish your "Agriculturist" this very day.

Mr. P. What? No! You don't say so? Can it be possible? What do you mean?

Mrs. P. What do I mean?

Mr. P. Yes, you — you haven't discovered a cure for the potato-rot, have you?

Mrs. P. I have.

Mr. P. Is it possible? (*In ecstasies.*) Oh, cucumbers! Embrace me, wife, embrace me. (*They embrace,* C.)

Mrs. P. Oh!

Mr. P. (*With arm around wife's neck.*) "Excellent creature, but I do love thee. And when I love thee not, chaos is come again."

Mrs. P. (*With simplicity.*) That's Shakspeare, isn't it?

Mr. P. Oh, no, my dear! That is from Longfellow's Paradise Lost. But is your receipt an economical one?

Mrs. P. It is. But you must render me a certain favor before you can receive it.

Mr. P. (*Earnestly.*) Yes!

Mrs. P. If you consent, as true as I am your lawful wife, your book shall be ready for press before sunset.

Mr. P. (*Rubbing hands joyfully.*) I am a made man. I am ready for any thing, — any thing you may demand. What do you wish? I will turn the cows, pigs, and sheep into the garden, pull up all my cabbages, take off my favorite game-cock's tail, and even annihilate my long-sweets, if you desire it.

Mrs. P. I shall want you to do none of these things.

Mr. P. What then? (*Aside.*) Oh! I am a new being.

Mrs. P. Do you remember your remarks of yesterday regarding Mrs. Stanford?

Mr. P. (*Joyfully.*) Perfectly, perfectly, my dear. I said I would do any thing in the world to repay her for the good turn she did me when last at Norton.

Mrs. P. And did you mean it?

Mr. P. To be sure, I did. And is this what you wish me to do?

Mrs. P. Yes.

Mr. P. But how?

Mrs. P. By immediately putting on your hat, and following me. (*Goes to closet, and takes from it bonnet and shawl.*)

Mr. P. But where are we going, Carrie?

Mrs. P. Why, to Mrs. Stanford's. Where did you think?

Mr. P. And, when we get there, I am to do what?

Mrs. P. (*Putting on bonnet.*) You are to ask no questions, but to follow my directions. (*Puts on shawl.*)

Mr. P. Allow me, dearest. (*Arranges her shawl.*)

Mrs. P. There, remember what I have said, and also that it is absolutely necessary that you perform every thing I may require of you, if you wish to obtain the receipt.

(*Exit*, C.D.)

Mr. P. (*Rapturously.*) Oh, it is a settled thing! I am a made man! A perfect elysium opens before me! Yes, unthought-of happiness awaits me! (*Dances down to* R. COR.) Ri-fol-de-rol-dol-diddle-dol-de-dol. (*Stops very gravely.*) But if I should happen to be disappointed, — but no, Carrie

would not deceive me. She is a most remarkable woman; so wise, so loving, so gentle, ——

Mrs. P. (*Screaming back of flat.*) Isaac!

Mr. P. Coming, coming. This very day, before to-night, I'm either made or undone quite! (*Exit*, C.D.)

SCENE II. — *A road.*

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW (L.).

Mr. P. What a wonderful woman my wife is. It will be utterly impossible for me to overtake her before she reaches Stanford's. (*Looks off* R.) There she goes, up the hill. She beckons for me to make haste. Ah, here comes John!

Enter JOHN (R.).

John. (*With Irish brogue.*) Good morning, sir.

Mr. P. Well, John, what is the news from town? But never mind, I cannot stop to hear. (*Crosses* R. JOHN *crosses* L.) O John! I want you to weed the onions to-day.

John. Which, sir?

Mr. P. The silver skins, or Jones's favorite. And let me see, — there is something else ——

John. Yees, sir.

Mr. P. Oh! crop old Suffolk's ears the very first thing you do; and be careful not to get them too short. And — John, you might take a small piece from his tail, if you think it will improve his looks.

John. I will, sir. It will improve his personal appearance very much entirely, sir.

(*Exit Mr.* PETTIGREW (R.). JOHN (L.).

SCENE III.

A drawing-room in the house of Mr. Stanford, with (C.) *doors opening into garden. — Set door* (2 E.R.). — *Set door* (2 E.L.). — *Handsome table* (R.), *on which a backgammon board and fan. — Easy-chair* (C.). — *Handsome sofa* (L.). — *Chairs, &c., about stage. — A chair each side of table* (R.).

Enter Mrs. PETTIGREW (C.D.).

Mrs. P. (*Coming down stage.*) At last, here I am; and now to find Nellie. But where is Isaac? (*Returns to* C.D.) He is so slow! The fellow isn't even in sight.

Enter Mrs. STANFORD (R.D.).

Mrs. S. (*Soberly.*) Carrie.

Mrs. P. (*Comes down* R.) Nellie, you see I have kept my word.

Mrs. S. Lay off your bonnet and shawl, my dear. (*Mrs. P. removes bonnet and shawl, and Mrs. S. carries them off,* R.D.)

Mrs. P. I wonder where Mr. Stanford is. (*Re-enter Mrs. S.*) Where is your husband, Nellie?

Mrs. S. He is up stairs; and he seems to be in great tribulation on account of his inability to find something. I know not what it is; but I suspect it is the gammon-board: for he has several times lately left the house at about this hour with that article under his arm. You can probably imagine where he carries it.

Mrs. P. What! to the hotel opposite?

Mrs. S. Yes. And, by the aid of an opera-glass, I have, on three occasions, distinctly seen him seated at a window in the second story, playing backgammon and draughts with the person of whom I have spoken to you.

Mrs. P. And does he mistrust that you are aware of this?

Mrs. S. Not for one moment. His story, which he imagines I am stupid enough to believe, is, that he takes the board to his friend Green's apothecary store, where he and the worthy proprietor of that medicinal establishment conjointly worry away the few hours before dinner.

Mrs. P. What is the name of this new boarder at the hotel?

Mrs. S. Her name is Mrs. Newcomb. I have been informed that she is a widow from Oxford, and that she is quite wealthy. (*She sees gammon-board on table,* R.) Why, here is the board now!

Mrs. P. Capital, Nellie. The exercise will do your husband good. He shall not have his game this morning. I have an excellent idea. (*They confer together,* R.)

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW, *unobserved* (C.D.).

Mr. P. I wonder what the first demand upon this self-sacrificing institution will be. I am really almost afraid that

Carrie will get me into difficulty. My courage is beginning to leave me. She knows, however, what is right and what is wrong. In fact, she is, as I often have occasion to remark, a most extraordinary woman. (*Thoughtfully.*) The end and purpose of whatever I may do is to please Mrs. Stanford; and the reward, oh! —— but what can Mrs. Stanford possibly desire of me? Oh! beware, Isaac, beware, 'tis ——

Mrs. P. (*Discovering Mr.* P.) Ah, you are here at last!

Mr. P. (*Aside, to wife,* C.) What must I do first, my love?

Mrs. P. (*Pointing to chair left of table.*) Sit right down here. And, Nellie, you sit opposite. (*They obey her.*) Now arrange the men, and commence to play.

Mr. P. (*Alarmed.*) Oh, no! not this, Carrie! Why, what will Jacob think?

Mrs. P. Never mind what he will think, but arrange the men.

Mrs. S. (*Smiling.*) An excellent commencement.

Mr. P. (*Greatly alarmed.*) But, Carrie — now — this is going a lēētle too far. It will create a disturbance. I know it will.

Mrs. P. Sir, as you hope to receive ——

Mr. P. (*Anxiously.*) Yes! — but! — I know!

Mrs. S. There is one man wanting. Mr. Pettigrew, have you a penny in your pocket to take its place?

Mr. P. (*Confused.*) Yes, yes, oh yes! (*With trembling voice, at same time feeling in pockets.*) What does this all mean? Can it be possible that these ladies wish to injure me, to — to ruin all my future hopes, — to —— (*Very nervously drawing potato from coat pocket.*) There was the man, black or white. (*Mrs.* S. *laughs. Mr.* P. *discovers his mistake, produces coin, lays potato on table.*) Oh! a penny! (*Aside.*) I am perfectly bewildered; the — the cold sweat runs off of me in — in —— What will this lead to? Jacob is my trusty friend.

Mrs. P. Ah, here comes Mr. Stanford! (*Resolutely.*) Husband, commence the game; and, remember, don't leave the room till I return. (*Exit,* 3 E.R.)

(*Mrs.* S. *and Mr.* P. *hurriedly arrange the board, and begin to play.*)

Mr. P. (*Aside, looking distrustfully at Mrs.* S.) Unconscionable woman!

Enter Mr. STANFORD (L.).

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Where in the world can that board be? (*Observes his wife and Mr.* P.) Double sixes! As I live, there's my friend Isaac; and playing gammon, too, with my wife. Well, I must say, I admire *this* arrangement. (*Angrily.*) She must have known what I was looking for. So, so, this is another piece of your cunning, is it? But you shall answer for it; and as for Mr. Pettigrew ——

Mr. P. (*Turns, observes Mr.* S., *crosses over to* L., *and shakes hands with him.*) Good-morning, Jacob. Beautiful weather. Don't go to town to-day, I suppose? Looking quite melancholy. What's turned up? Eh? Sick? No. Wife's a beautiful player. (*Resumes seat.*) Shall be through in a few minutes.

Mr. S. (*Extremely agreeable.*) Lovely day, Isaac. Excellent weather for farming and ——

Mr. P. (*Interrupting.*) Very, very. I shall be through presently, Jacob. (*Aside.*) Good. He's not angry.

Mr. S. Egad! I like this fellow's impudence. What combination of circumstances could have taken him from his farm at such an hour? (*Angrily.*) The idea of a married man playing backgammon with another man's wife; and before dinner, too, — yes, before dinner. The thing is preposterous. It is abominable. And what will Mrs. Newcomb think? I promised to see her over an hour ago. Can my wife have discovered any thing? Oh, no, no! (*Goes up the stage, and looks out of window in flat.*)

Mr. P. (*Rising.*) You are a remarkable player, Mrs. Stanford. I hope I shall have another hand at this before long; for, notwithstanding I must confess myself most egregiously vanquished, it is the most interesting game I have enjoyed for a great while.

Mrs. S. Thank you, sir. (*Anxiously, aside.*) I wish Carrie was here. I do not dare to remain without her. Perhaps she is in my room. I'll see. (*Exit,* R.D.)

Mr. P. (*Aside.*) I think a modicum of flattery is very appropriate on some occasions; besides, I have every reason to believe that Mrs. Stanford has the receipt of which my wife has informed me. (*Ecstatic.*) Perhaps it has been thoroughly tested, and found to be an infallible cure. I feel assured it has. If so, how unlike it will be to *many* of my

receipts! Well, Jacob, what is the news? (*Mr.* S. *comes down*, L.) Do the hard times affect your business?

Mr. S. (*Hesitatingly.*) No — no.

Mr. P. I'm glad to hear it.

Mr. S. Thank you. But haven't you been informed?

Mr. P. No!

Mr. S. (*Cheerfully.*) Why, all our mills have stopped. In short, to use a common expression, we have failed; and here I am, away from business, care, trouble, etc., etc., while my junior partners are making the preliminary arrangements to present our infuriated creditors with, — well, the amount is hardly worth mentioning. (*Laughs.*)

Mr. P. (*Greatly interested.*) Indeed! Believe me, Jacob, this is the first intimation I have had of it. I am very sorry for you.

Mr. S. (*Laughing.*) Sorry, Isaac. Why? (*With assumed gravity.*) Yes, it is rather unfortunate. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mr. P. (*Greatly astonished at his friend's coolness.*) "Unfortunate!" (*Aside.*) He seems to take delight in his misfortunes. He actually revels in them. Singular being. (*To Mr.* S.) I suppose it is merely a temporary suspension?

Mr. S. Bless you, no. We have stopped for good. I have left the business for ever.

Mr. P. (*Sympathetically.*) I am very sorry.

Mr. S. (*Petulantly.*) For what, sir?

Mr. P. (*Startled.*) Oh! — I — (*Aside.*) "For what." The man must be unwell.

Mr. S. For what are you sorry?

Mr. P. (*Confused.*) Ahem! — I — any prospect of another business? Going back into the law?

Mr. S. Law? Bah!

Mr. P. (*Smiling.*) Well, yes, yes, I see, I see, very good. Law, bar. I believe the members of that profession are in the habit of visiting such places. Then you don't intend to go back into the law?

Mr. S. (*Emphatically.*) No, sir!

Mr. P. (*Very mildly.*) Oh! — you — don't!

Mr. S. I do not. I have once very nearly starved in that profession, and I am not ambitious to make a second attempt. Since we moved from the smoke and confusion of the metropolis, I have become so attached to my new home

that I have at last resolved to give up city life and city business, and, in future, to follow the same praiseworthy vocation already adopted by yourself.

Mr. P. (*Agreeably surprised.*) What! turn farmer?

Mr. S. The same.

Mr. P. Is it possible? Can I believe my ears? Give me your hand, Jacob. (*They shake hands*, C.) This is the best news I have heard for —— you are not deceiving me?

Mr. S. No, Isaac.

Mr. P. (*Rapturously.*) No! Then you shall possess the first copy of my "Economical Agriculturist" which falls from the press; and, to prove to you the infinite joy I experience from the *sudden change which has come over you*, the work shall be dedicated to you. Yes, your name shall appear in large letters on the first page, immediately under the frontispiece, which, by the by, is to be a beautifully got-up thing: one will hardly be able to distinguish it from a steel engraving. In the foreground, you see a fine representation of the Suffolk hog. This is to be colored, and, of course, will attract the reader's attention, whose eye, naturally enough, having feasted upon this work of art, will wander to the reading matter below, viz.: "To JACOB STANFORD, ESQ." (Jacob Stanford, Esq., in pre-eminent pica), "as a memorial of private esteem and friendship, this volume is respectfully dedicated by THE AUTHOR." But where is Carrie? She must hear of your intentions immediately. (*Goes to* C.D.) She will be delighted. I will return presently, Jacob. (*Exit*, C.D.)

Mr. S. (*Laughing.*) Poor fellow! (*Sternly.*) But where's my wife? (*Enter Mrs.* STANFORD, R.D.) So, so, Mrs. Stanford, this is the way for a dutiful wife to behave, is it? (*Points to gammon-board.*) Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

Mrs. S. Ashamed of myself — for what, dear?

Mr. S. Bah! Don't dear me. A pretty piece of business. Don't you know that it is not only indiscreet, but very wrong, to behave in such a manner? If — if — I wasn't a man possessed of complete control over my temper (*walks angrily to and fro*), there is no knowing what might transpire! No, Mrs. Stanford, there is no knowing what might transpire! Many a wife has, by such a course, rendered a home, which might otherwise have been a paradise, a — a — a perfect (*buttons up coat*) — I will not say what, madam!

Mrs. S. (*Imploringly.*) But husband!

Mr. S. Not a word. A wife who would play a game of backgammon with another woman's husband without her own husband's consent, and at such an hour ——

Mrs. S. Hour?

Mr. S. (*Furiously.*) Yes, hour! hour! — isn't worthy the name of wife!

Mrs. S. But you could not object to my playing with your friend Isaac? There can be no harm, dearest.

Mr. S. It makes no difference, no, not an iota, madam; and, what is more, Mrs. Pettigrew shall hear of it *too.*

Mrs. S. (*Alarmed.*) You will not ——

Mr. S. (*Interrupting.*) Yes, wife, I will. When a man, having so faithful a wife as Mrs. Pettigrew, acts in so unpardonable a manner, he is a contemptible fellow. But, in this case, you are the most to be blamed. Yes — you. (*Greatly excited, throws himself on to sofa,* L.)

Mrs. S. (*Aside.*) Can it be possible that this is real jealousy?

Mr. S. (*Springing from sofa.*) There! I cannot remain quiet: you have riled me for the day. I will go to my room, and, if Mr. Pettigrew returns, tell him I am out. Remember, Mrs. Stanford, remember what I have said to you. (*Aside.*) There, I guess that will do very well. (*Smiling.*) What would the widow say if she had heard me? (*Exit,* L.)

Mrs. S. Ha! ha! ha! ha! (*Enter Mrs.* PETTIGREW, 3 E.R.)

Mrs. P. What is the matter, Nellie?

Mrs. S. (*Still laughing.*) J — J — Jacob has this moment gone to his room in a *tremendous* rage. (*Soberly.*) But it is all your fault, Carrie. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW, *out of breath* (C.D.).

Mr. P. Carrie, why, where — have — you — been? I thought I should never find you. Only — think of it. Stanford is about to turn farmer. (*Exhausted, sits down on sofa,* L.)

Mrs. P. That is nothing new, my dear. But, Isaac (*goes to sofa*), I am afraid you forgot your promise, didn't you? I think I desired you to remain here till I returned.

Mr. P. (*Anxiously.*) Yes, but ——

Mrs. P. (*Interrupting.*) Not a word.

Mr. P. Now, Carrie!

Mrs. P. Be silent. Remember your promise. It is not too late now.

Mr. P. (*Satisfied.*) Oh! 'tis not!

Mrs. P. (C.) Nellie, I believe you said that your husband does not know that you are aware of his intended game with Mrs. Newcomb?

Mrs. S. (R.C.) No, Carrie. And, as much as he aggravated me, I retained that knowledge for another occasion.

Mr. P. (*Aside.*) Game with Mrs. Newcomb! Newcomb, Newcomb: who is Mrs. Newcomb? It can't be possible that Jacob, — pshaw! no, no.

Mr. S. (*Without*, L., *angrily.*) *Mrs. Stanford! Mrs. Stanford!*

Mrs. P. Don't answer him, Nellie.

Mr. P. (*Rising.*) Why, what's the matter with Jacob?

Mrs. P. Remain quiet, and you will see.

Mr. S. Mrs. Stanford! Mrs. Stanford!

Mr. P. (*Alarmed.*) But, wife, he may be in difficulty. I once knew a man ——

Mrs. P. (*Interrupting.*) Husband, *the receipt.*

Mr. S. (*Louder.*) Mrs. Stanford! Mrs. Stanford! (*Enters*, L., *is greatly abashed, pauses a few moments, coughs and hesitates.*) Ah, good-morning, Mrs. Pettigrew! (*Passes Mr.* P., *and goes* L.C.)

Mrs. S. (R.). *Mrs.* P. (R.C.). *Mr.* P. *front of sofa* (L.).

Mrs. P. Good-morning, sir. You seem excited.

Mr. S. (*Assuming hoarse voice.*) I — I have a very severe cold. (*Coughs.*)

Mr. P. I thought your voice sounded rather hoarse. It beats all how suddenly these colds come on. A most miserable climate this. I have given up all hopes for my corn this year. But, Jacob, you look very much excited. Is any thing the matter?

Mr. S. (*Confused, with natural voice.*) Oh! — no — no — I might possibly have strained my voice (*lovingly*) calling for Nellie.

Mr. P. But your voice sounds better now. Have you taken any thing?

Mr. S. (*Hoarse.*) I thought she was in the garden, and the servants are all — (*confused*) — it is a great way to the garden — that is, the garden is a great distance, and — that is — if — but ——

Mr. P. Very likely. But, Jacob, you look very pale; and now, while I speak — why, you are flushed. There must be something else?

Mr. S. (*Hoarse.*) Oh, no, no!

Mr. P. Oh! you do, you surely look very strange! I'll leave it to the ladies.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Curse the fellow's impudence!

Mrs. S. I should think you might look strange, Mr. Stanford. A cold! I am astonished at this duplicity. Why not act like a man, sir? Why not acknowledge that you was angry when you called for me? Your voice then bespoke anger, if your conduct does not now. He was angry with me, Mr. Pettigrew, because of that game of ours at backgammon.

Mr. S. But, Nellie, my dear.

Mrs. S. Don't dear me, sir, after chiding me as you did. You are a cruel husband. (*Cries.*) You do not love me — you — you will break my heart — you will. (*Goes up stage, crying.*)

Mr. S. Now, Nellie. (*Follows her up stage, and appears to be endeavoring to effect a reconciliation. Mrs.* P. *crosses to* L.)

Mr. P. Come, come, Jacob.

Mrs. P. (*Checking him.*) Will you be quiet?

Mr. P. (*Aside, to Mrs.* P.) O Carrie, Carrie! I fear that we are the cause of all this trouble. It must go no further. I feel duty bound to stop it.

Mrs. P. (*Aside, to Mr.* P.) Very well, sir, do as you wish; but, if you interfere, the "Agriculturist," I am afraid, will not be completed to-day. (*Aside.*) Eureka! (*Whispers to Mr.* P.)

Mr. P. (*Astonished.*) No!

Mrs. P. Yes.

Mr. P. Oho! I see it all; I see it all. Mrs. S. doubts the constancy of Mr. S. Her desire is to reclaim him. You say she wishes to excite his jealousy? So, so! so, so! I, your husband, am the worthy instrument selected to effect a proper settlement?

Mrs. P. The same.

Mr. P. I see it all. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Jacob! I pity him: but he deserves to suffer; yes, indeed he does. You say there is no doubt in regard to that receipt?

Mrs. P. Not the least.

Mr. P. Then here goes. (*Checks himself.*) But what shall I do, Carrie?

Mrs. S. What will our friends think of us, sir? (*Walks up and down stage, crying bitterly; finally settles into chair left of table* R. *Mr.* S., *discouraged, throws himself into easy-chair.*)

Mrs. P. Appear to be in love with his wife.

Mr. P. Good! I will. (*Crosses to Mrs.* S.) There, there, Mrs. Stanford, don't take it so hard. If he is ugly, don't notice it. Trust in me, Mrs. Stanford. Give me your confidence. I will be your friend to the last. (*Glances sideways at wife, who looks at him encouragingly.*)

Mr. S. (*Springing from chair.*) Sir!

Mr. P. (*Shouting.*) Sir to you, sir!

Mrs. P. Excellent!

Mr. S. (*Astonished.*) Mrs. Pettigrew!

Mr. P. You have been a much-abused woman, madam; but, henceforth, things shall be different.

Mrs. S. (*Sobbing.*) Thank — thank you, sir.

Mr. S. Isaac Pettigrew! Wife!

Mr. P. (*Greatly excited.*) Silence, you hedge-hog, you reptile! See what you have done! (*Mrs.* S. *sobs.*) You monster! See, sir, see! or can't you see, you cabbage-head, you potato without an eye? Your conduct has been barbarous, sir! There, Nellie, there; dry up your tears: he is not worth minding.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) He calls her Nellie! Well, this is most extraordinary treatment for a man to receive in his own house. Mr. Pettigrew, I command you to leave my house *immediately!*

Mr. P. (*Furiously seizing potato from table.*) I shall do no such thing, sir! If you can't attend to your wife's wants and necessities, I will. (*Shakes potato menacingly at Mr.* S.) Yes, sir, *I* will! (*Mrs.* P. *screams, and appears to faint. Mr.* P., *alarmed, crosses quickly to her, places left arm around her waist, and she seizes his right hand.*) Carrie, my dear!

Mrs. P. (*Aside to him.*) Only imitation, my love. Of course, I must be jealous.

Mr. P. Oh, yes, of course! (*Returns to Mrs.* S. *Mrs.* P. *staggers back, with potato in her hand.*) Jacob, pass a chair to my wife. Do you hear, sir?

Mr. S. (*Passes arm-chair, into which Mrs.* P. *falls.*) What have we here? (*Inquisitively takes potato from Mrs.* P.'s *hands, and goes forward to examine it. Mr.* P. *indignantly follows him, seizes potato, places it carefully into his pocket, glances tragically at Mr.* S., *and returns to Mrs.* S.)

Mrs. P. (*Crying.*) Oh, dear!

Mr. S. Poor woman! poor woman! And my wife, too! Oh! this will never do, I ——

Mrs. P. (*Piteously.*) O Mr. Stanford!

Mr. S. (*Same tone.*) O Mrs. Pettigrew!

Mr. P. Well, sir, well: pay her, sir, if you owe her any thing! We can dispense with these guttural sounds.

Mr. S. (*Enraged.*) You young dog!

Mr. P. (*Coolly.*) Puppy, sir, puppy, if you wish. The two expressions are synonymous, and the latter avoids circumlocution. (*Takes fan from table, and calmly fans Mrs.* S.)

Mr. S. (*Exasperated.*) Once more, sir, I command you to leave my house!

Mr. P. Once more, sir, I will not leave your house, sir! No, sir! Nellie has invited me to dine with her, sir; and to take tea with her, sir; and I shall remain, sir, until to-morrow, sir! (*Mrs.* P. *screams.*)

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) The man must be insane.

Mr. P. Attend to my wife, sir! There you stand, as stupid as a —— The fact is, Jacob, you don't know what common decency consists in. (*Calmly fans Mrs.* S.)

Mr. S. Ha! (*Aside.*) But no: he knows not what he says. I will endeavor to be calm. But, then, the conduct of my wife! Can she have heard any thing? I am afraid she has. But no: she probably mistrusts; that's all. It can be nothing more. I see it all. She profits by Pettigrew's insanity; and this is a device to warn me, in case matters are as she suspects. (*Smiles.*) What shrewd invention! By remaining perfectly indifferent, I shall not only appear innocent, and thus remove her suspicions, but I shall so aggravate her, that, in the failure of this piece of stratagem, she will be properly punished for her presumption. Poor Mrs. Pettigrew is the only sufferer. (*Coolly lies back on sofa, and folds his arms.*)

Mrs. S. (*Lovingly.*) You are so kind, Isaac; so unlike my cruel husband.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) She calls him Isaac! (*Aloud.*) Mrs. Jacob Stanford! I — I —— (*Aside.*) But my determination. (*Resumes his former position on sofa.*)

Mr. P. Were you but mine!

Mrs. P. (*Angrily.*) Isaac!

Mr. P. Hold your tongue, Mrs. Pettigrew!

Mrs. P. (*Burying face in handkerchief.*) I shall go mad!

Mr. P. It makes no difference where you go, madam!

Mrs. P. (*Laughing one side.*) How extremely natural Isaac performs! He would have made a most excellent actor.

Mr. P. Were you but mine! (*Takes Mrs.* STANFORD'S *hand. They come forward.*)

Mrs. S. (*Looking into his face lovingly.*) Yes!

Mr. P. Were you but mine! (*Aside.*) What if she were mine?

Mrs. S. Proceed. I do delight to hear you speak. "Oh! as the bee upon the flower, I hang upon the honey of thy eloquent tongue. Were I but yours, I should indeed be blest."

Mr. P. "O Pauline!" — I — I mean, my dearest Nellie, could love fulfil its prayers, this hand would lead thee. (*Aside.*) Where would it lead her?

Mrs. S. "My own dear love!"

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) This is all done to draw me out; yes, to *draw me out;* and then, *having drawn me out*, to expose me. But it shall not be. Oh, no! (*Lies back, and covers face with handkerchief.*)

Mr. P. (*Thinking.*) I have it! (*To Mrs.* S.) Wouldst thou have me paint the home in which such love as ours should dwell?

Mrs. S. Yes, dearest Isaac!

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) Capital! What would Bulwer say if he were here?

Mr. P. An humble farmhouse, lifting to eternal summer its mossy walls from out an ever-yielding orchard of richest golden fruit. Within, all peace and happiness should dwell; while the neatness of each separate apartment should syllable, in accents more audible than words, thy heavenly name. Remote, a few rods only from this humble dwelling, a well-

filled barn, symbolical of wealth and happiness, should form a quiet habitation for our horses, oxen, cows, and pigs; while further back, — say, on the left, — and facing a richly verdant lawn, an unassuming hennery should rise, in front of which, at early morn, we'd sit beneath the outspread arms of some old favorite oak, the while the gallinaceous throng comes forth in twos and threes to view the rising sun: —

And as the mother-hen each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to scratch up bugs and flies,
This little hand (*raising her hand*) should scatter to and fro, out of its pearly whiteness as pure as any snow,
Both corn and dough and other food, which in due time would make the biddies grow.
Each chick, each hen, and each hen's husband, gathering round,
Would eat this food as it fell on the ground.

Nothing should disturb the quiet of this portion of our stock.

Mr. S. (*Rising.*) Nonsense!

Mr. P. Silence, you old hen-hawk!

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Poor fellow! I can forgive *him;* but as to my wife —— But I must be calm. (*Again extends himself on sofa, and covers his face.*)

Mr. P. Thus far, dost thou like the picture?

Mrs. S. Indeed I do! But, alas! cruel fate has given me to another! Oh, if I could but implant a heart like thine within my husband's breast!

Mr. P. Since cruel fate has dealt so shabbily with us both, why not dissolve the bonds which bind us to those we cannot love, and, hand in hand, go forth in search of happiness? (*They go,* R.)

Mrs. P. Husband!

Mr. P. Wife!

Mr. S. (*Jumping from sofa.*) Mrs. Stanford!

Mrs. P. (*Crying bitterly.*) O Isaac, Isaac! (*Dries tears.*) But no, Mr. Pettigrew, I will submit to such treatment no longer! Your conduct is abominable!

Mrs. S. (*Alarmed.*) I am afraid we are going too ——

Mr. P. (*Interrupting.*) Hush! Yes, of course we are going to ride this afternoon. I have spoken for the horse and chaise already. (*Aside to Mrs.* S.) Carrie and I understand each other. (*Mr.* S. *and Mrs.* P. *look amazed.*)

Mrs. S. Which horse did you engage, the red or the white one? You know, we were speaking about that yesterday.

Mr. P. (*Hesitating.*) Yes, — oh, yes! we were speaking about that. (*Aside.*) These lawyers' wives! (*Aloud.*) Oh! I have engaged the long-tailed red, — *the same we had last* Tuesday.

Mr. S. (*Staring with astonishment.*) "The long-tailed red, — the same we had last Tuesday!" (*Folds arms.*) But I'll be calm.

Mrs. P. (*Greatly agitated.*) Ride! Oh! you will ride with a married woman — yes — and — and — you — you have been to ride with her before, — last Tuesday?

Mr. P. Yes, a week ago to-morrow; and we shall go again to-day.

Mrs. P. (*Resolutely.*) Then I go too!

Mr. P. Not with us, madam. Perhaps Jacob will take you.

Mr. S. I shan't go!

Mr. P. None of your nonsense! Of course you'll go. Where's your gallantry?

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) The fellow has cheek enough for another row of teeth.

Mrs. S. Now do, dear J — Mr. Stanford?

Mr. S. (*Delighted.*) She was about to call me her dear Jacob.

Mrs. P. (*Aside, to Mr.* S.) Say you will take me.

Mr. S. (*Astonished.*) Madam! (*Aside.*) Can it be possible that Mrs. Pettigrew is insane? Heavens! perhaps my wife is deranged also! Yes, it must be: she never could act so in her right mind. They are all demented; and this is no plot, after all.

Mr. P. Nellie, in order that your feet may not suffer from the cold, I would recommend that you warm a brick to take with us.

Mr. S. Warm a brick!

Mr. P. *Yes, warm a brick!* You seem determined not to appreciate any of my efforts to please you, this morning. I suppose you even object to this benevolent forethought of mine.

Mrs. P. (*Aside, to Mr.* S.) We can take one too.

Mr. S. (*Looking at Mrs.* P. *with surprise.*) Madam! (*To Mr.* P.) I not only object to the brick, but to the ride, and your entire conduct since you entered my house.

Mrs. S. But we shall take a brick, nevertheless, Mr. Stanford; and we will take a gammon-board, too, if we

wish. Do you understand? (*Significantly.*) A gammon-board! If you object to have this one go out of the house, perhaps we can borrow one at the hotel, or of Green the apothecary.

Mr. P. We can obtain one at the hotel, I have no doubt; for a lady friend of mine, who boards there, is very partial to the game.

Mrs. P. (*Aside, to Mr.* S.) Then we can take this one.

Mr. S. (*Buttoning up coat, and viewing Mrs. P.*) Mrs. Isaac Pettigrew! (*Aside, alarmed.*) Green, hotel, gammon-board! Yes, she must know all. She is not insane; oh, no! Even now, though, it is *possible* that she only suspects. (*Resumes seat on sofa.*)

Mrs. P. Don't you think you had better engage your horse? It is a very fine day; and I am afraid you will stand a poor chance, unless ——

Mr. P. Now I think of it, at the time I spoke for my team there were but one horse, one chaise, and a carryall, which were not engaged. I am afraid, Mr. Stanford, that you will be obliged to postpone your ride, after all.

Mrs. P. Then, sir, I shall go with you.

Mr. P. Etiquette, Mrs. P., would require that you should be invited before making such an assertion.

Mrs. P. "Etiquette!" You not only injure my feelings (*crying*) by — by the affection you manifest towards another in my presence, but — (*sobs*) — but you seem determined to br — break my heart also. You — you —— But never mind: I will leave you, Mr. Pettigrew; yes, for ever! When you return to your once peaceful and happy home, and — (*sobs*) — and find the life of your house (*sobs*), the joy of your fireside, gone (*sobs*) for ever, you — (*sobs*) — you may then ap — (*sobs*) — appreciate the value of a good wife. (*Aside.*) I think Isaac has well earned his receipt; so I will go into the next room, enclose it in an envelope, and send it home immediately, so that he may receive it when he returns.

Mr. P. Mrs. Pettigrew! why don't you go?

Mrs. P. Farewell for — (*sobs*) — for ever!

(*Exit,* L.D.)

Mr. P. (*Alarmed.*) What if Carrie thought me in earnest? Perhaps my affection for Mrs. Stanford has been more natural than Carrie desired. It — it may be so. It — is strange I didn't think of that before. I — I — feel alarmed. I — I tremble both for my wife and the receipt.

What if I should lose both? Oh, horrors! My situation is very awkward. I — I know not what to do. (*Crosses* L.) I must after her; yes, and, throwing myself at her feet, implore her forgiveness. (*Aloud, with trembling voice.*) Nellie, my dear, I will but quell the ardor of my infuriated wife, and then return. (*Exit*, L.D.)

Mrs. S. (R.C.) Now for an outbreak.

Mr. S. (*Sitting on sofa, with back to wife.*) He's gone! What shall I say to my wife? (*Thinks.*) I'll say nothing to her; no, not a syllable. I will appear unconcerned, and take a nap. (*Lies back as before.*)

Mrs. S. No storm. What means this calm indifference? Ah! my dear husband, you imagine that you disguise your feelings by this management. But no: this very stillness tells me, more distinctly than words, that you appreciate the picture we have drawn you. However, he may change, even now, he's so impulsive. For fear of this, I think I'll leave him to his tranquil mood, and see what Carrie is about. Poor fellow! I would like to kiss him, even now. (*Exit*, L.D.)

Mr. S. (*Rising.*) Then she's gone too. (*Noise*, L.) But here comes that infernal scoundrel again. (*Again extends himself on sofa, and re-covers face.*

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW (L.).

Mr. P. (*Crossing* R.) She says all's right, and that the receipt for the eternal extermination of the potato-rot is forthcoming. My book shall go to press to-morrow! Oh the fame I shall acquire! But I'll not be proud. Oh, no! It shall never be said that pride entered the breast of Isaac Pettigrew. No, no: I'll wear my honors modestly. I will exclaim, with the poet, —

> "And what is fame? The meanest have their day:
> The greatest can but blaze, then pass away."

Now for a little sport on my own account. (*Crosses to sofa, seizes Mr.* S. *furiously by arm, and walks him, with handkerchief over his face, to* R. COR.) Now that we are alone, I wish to talk to you like a friend.

Mr. S. (*Uncovering face.*) Well, sir! well!

Mr. P. (*Shouting.*) Like a friend! In thunder-tones, I

repeat it. (*Very tamely.*) Like a friend. (*Arranges two chairs,* C. *and* L.C.)

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Too true; too true! The cares and anxieties occasioned by his farm have turned his brain.

Mr. P. (*Sitting,* L.C.) In the first place, Mr. Stanford, be seated.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Unfortunate being! But why should I not humor him? Yes, I will. (*Sits,* C.)

Mr. P. But no: before being seated, produce your meerschaum,—ay, your meerschaum,—Mr. Stanford. The enormity of your conduct has so enraged me, sir, that nothing but the potent charms of a well-colored meerschaum can allay the inward desire which I have to administer to your dilapidated person an immediate chastisement!

Mr. S. Sir! (*Aside.*) Poor fellow!

Mr. P. No delay, sir! Bring forth your meerschaum!

Mr. S. Sir! I — I do not smoke.

Mr. P. You do not smoke? "Lives there a man with soul so dead?" You do not smoke?

Mr. S. (*Emphatically.*) No, sir!

Mr. P. He does not smoke! The man who hath no meerschaum in his house is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils! You have no meerschaum? Then, sir, you're not aware what heavenly bliss you do deny yourself. Could you but know what balm, what solace, what assuaging attributes, what mitigating qualities, are expressed by this dissyllabic word, not a day, *no, not an hour*, would elapse, before, with serene joy, with placid satisfaction, you would congratulate yourself upon being the blissful proprietor of at least one of these celebrated *chameleonistic* pipes. Having procured your meerschaum, the next step is to color it. And now, if you are a man of genius, what unthought-of joy awaits you! A new field opens before you. You can now convince the world, although hitherto you have displayed no brilliancy of intellect, and notwithstanding your daily manifestations of stupidity, that there has ever existed an inherent spark of artistic merit, *quiescent*, perhaps, till the present time, but now awake, and glowing with marvellous effulgence. With parental care you'll watch from day to day the gradual progress to complexional excellence: and when, at last, the happy goal is reached; when, with pipe in mouth, amidst one vast enchanting cloud of now rolling, tumbling, now smoothly gliding,

gently curling, now quick, now slowly rising, volatile, fumy ringlets, you can confront, without emotions of trepidation, your fellow-men, and, complaisantly laying your hand upon your heart, declare, *My meerschaum's colored!* — then, sir, but not till then, exclaim, *I am a man!* (*Thinking.*) But — you — do — not — smoke? Nor pipe nor cigars?

Mr. S. (*Who has been watching Mr.* P. *with feelings of pity.*) Neither.

Mr. P. Well then, sir, such being the case, what am I to understand by the strange manner in which you treat your wife?

Mr. S. (*Shaking finger close to Mr.* P.'s *face.*) Understand whatever you may wish, sir! Do you understand that, sir?

Mr. P. (*Indignantly drawing chair away.*) Jacob, you are really, without any exception whatever, the most consummate fool that ever I was acquainted with.

Mr. S. (*Angrily.*) Pettigrew! (*Aside.*) But why should I rail with a madman?

Mr. P. I came to you as a friend; I came with tears in my eyes, bitter tears, occasioned by your heartless conduct, and attempted to reason with you, to advise you as one friend should advise another, to win you back to the paths of virtue; and you have not only denied me your meerschaum ——

Mr. S. (*Interrupting.*) I have no meerschaum!

Mr. P. Hold your tongue, sir! You have not only refused me your meerschaum, but have seen fit to (*with wounded feelings*) insult me; yes, literally insult me!

Mr. S. (*Rising from chair, greatly excited.*) You deserve to be kicked into the street, sir!

Mr. P. "Kicked into the street!" And thus you serve a benefactor? Ingrate! This, then, is my reward for endeavoring to effect a reconciliation between yourself and wife?

Mr. S. Reconciliation!

Mr. P. Yes, reconciliation! It is now evident that your sordid disposition to accumulate not only deprives you of a meerschaum, but a dictionary also.

Mr. S. I — I will thank you not to meddle with my family affairs.

Mr. P. But, friend Jacob, the lady is young and delicate.

Mr. S. Well, sir! — well! What is that to you?

Mr. P. Every thing; yes, every thing! She cannot long exist under such treatment. It is wearing her into her grave.

Mr. S. What do you mean?

Mr. P. If you but knew the enormity of your conduct, you would mend, Jacob. Now reflect, Jacob, and promise me that you will reform, Jacob.

Mr. S. (*Exasperated.*) Isaac Hartshorn Pettigrew, I have put up with your insolence full long enough; and now, sir, allow me to inform you, that unless, without delay, you quietly evacuate these premises, you will have the pleasure of being conducted hence by a worthy member of our police.

Mr. P. Sir, my cause is a righteous one, and I fear nought. Do you presume to intimidate me by such nonsensical threats? Police! — you couldn't find one in half an hour! Police! But I see, — yes, I see, — Jacob Livingston Stanford, your motive. You have a private ambition to lose an eye, or a tooth, or a nose, or some other trifle, I suppose. (*Looks at him fiercely.*) Your wife, sir, I adore: but you I — I do not adore; and, were you the husband of another, I would annihilate you on the spot! Your wife is your preserver. (*Goes towards* R.D.) Meditate, sir, upon your folly; ponder well and thoroughly; and resolve, when I return, to merit my exculpation.

Mr. S. Come back, sir! That's my wife's room! Where are you going?

Mr. P. To comfort the aching heart of wrong-ed innocence. (*Exit*, R.D.)

Mr. S. (*Following him up to* C.D.) Here, you rascal, you villain, you! (*Enter Mrs.* Pettigrew, L.D., *uttering most lamentable outcries.*) Oh, dear! oh, dear! they will drive me raving mad! (*Comes forward, greatly bewildered.*)

Mrs. P. (*Crying.*) Mr. Stanford! — Mr. Stanford! — boo! — oo! — oo! (*Threws herself into easy-chair.*)

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) And I have always thought him my friend!

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) He will not notice me! (*Cries louder than before.*)

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) And his poor wife! Oh, he must be deranged!

Mrs. P. Boo! — oo! — oo!

Mr. S. And my wife too! Oh!

Mrs. P. Boo! — oo! — oo!

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) I suppose I must say something to this unfortunate woman. Why shouldn't I condole with her? Why shouldn't I sympathize with her? (*Thinks.*) I will! Madam!

Mrs. P. Mr. Stanford! (*Sobs.*)

Mr. S. (*Very sympathetically.*) Madam, do not despair. How long do these fits of insanity generally endure? Is this malady hereditary!

Mrs. P. (*Sobs.*) Insanity! (*Laughing one side.*) Insanity!

Mr. S. Yes, Mrs. Pettigrew: were you not aware of it? Alas! I fear the strangeness of his conduct can be attributed only to some cerebral derangement.

Mrs. P. O my dear Mr. Stanford! — (*Cries.*) — If it were but insanity, there might be some hope of effecting a cure.

Mr. S. (*Greatly excited.*) You do not presume to say that your friend and my husband — no! my husband and your — no! — yes! Pshaw! Do you suppose that my friend Isaac would, in a healthy mental condition, have the audacity to make love to my wife before — before my very face and eyes?

Mrs. P. (*Crying.*) He — he falls in love with every pretty woman he sees, sir — boo! — oo! What — what shall I do? (*Laughs one side.*)

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Pretty woman! Yes, Nellie is pretty. (*Aloud.*) The reprobate!

Mrs. P. No, *not that.* He is my husband.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) And she loves him still. Would Nellie love me if she *really* knew the similarity between Isaac and myself? If she really knew: egad! I am afraid she does know. (*Mrs.* P. *sobs.*) This is a very unfortunate affair, Mrs. Pettigrew; but what do you imagine my sufferings are?

Mrs. P. Alas! Nellie has been very indiscreet, — very. But then, Mr. Stanford, haven't you said or done some little thing, some very little thing, perhaps, which, to punish you for ——

Mr. S. (*Interrupting.*) No: I have done nothing.

Mrs. P. You must excuse me. I didn't know but that there might have been some little thoughtlessness on your part, some slight but unintentional neglect; for Nellie loves you as she does her life.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Poor thing! How I have abused her!

Mrs. P. I thought this might possibly be the case; but (*crying*) my — my husband's actions are real. There is no pretence in *his* behavior. I could mention a dozen instances of such manifestations as you have seen to-day.

Mr. S. And you really think he's not insane?

Mrs. P. (*In despair.*) I know not what to think. (*Sobs.*) Three weeks since, a lady from Oxford arrived in town, and ——

Mr. S. A lady from Oxford?

Mrs. P. Yes: a widow lady, I believe.

Mr. S. (*Impatiently.*) Well!

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) He's becoming interested.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Mrs. Newcomb arrived exactly three weeks to-morrow.

Mrs. P. Since this woman entered our village —— (*Sobs.*)

Mr. S. Yes, yes!

Mrs. P. Since (*sobs*) she entered our village —— (*Sobs.*)

Mr. S. Well! what?

Mrs. P. All the amenities of our home have vanished, and — and (*cries*) Isaac's mania for farming has — (*sobs*) — has turned to an (*sobs*) indescribable passion to indulge in the game of ba — (*sobs*) — ba — backgammon. He visits the hotel regularly, each afternoon. He always takes our backgammon-board with him; and I am informed that the person with whom he plays is this widow from Oxford.

Mr. S. (*Aside.*) Does this woman tell the truth? or is she showing me my own likeness?

Mrs. P. Well, sir! (*Sobs.*)

Mr. S. Are you quite sure he goes to the hotel?

Mrs. P. Alas! Mr. Stanford, it is too true.

Mr. S. Is it possible? I discovered him this very morning, not an hour since, playing this interesting game with my wife.

Mrs. P. (*Astonished.*) You did? What! with Nellie? (*Wiping eyes.*)

Mr. S. Yes, with my wife. But in regard to this lady from Oxford?

Mrs. P. Well, sir. Alas that I should be obliged to reveal my domestic afflictions! But, Mr. Stanford, I come to you as an old friend of the family.

Mr. S. (*Nervously.*) I understand, Mrs. Pettigrew; I understand. But this lady, — her name is what?

Mrs. P. Oh! her name is Newton — or Newhall — or ——

Mr. S. Is it Newcomb?

Mrs. P. Yes, that's the name. You know her, then?

Mr. S. (*Confused.*) Oh! — no! — no! I accidentally saw her name on the hotel-books.

Mrs. P. Oh! you are not acquainted with her? And you have never seen her?

Mr. S. No! — yes! — once! (*Aside.*) Is this female quizzing me?

Mrs. P. Now, my dear friend Stanford, as I come to you for advice, I wish you to give it without prejudice either to Isaac or myself. In regard to my erring husband's conduct, nothing extenuate, nor ——

Mr. S. No, marm!

Mrs. P. Imagine, if possible, that you occupy his position. (*Mr. S. becomes excited.*) You will then be more lenient towards him. Imagine that you have been in the habit of visiting this widow.

Mr. S. But, Mrs. Pettigrew!

Mrs. P. Only imagine, that's all; for one of your true and noble disposition would not stoop to such a thing, of course. Only *imagine* the thing.

Mr. S. But I go to town every afternoon, so — I — I really cannot bring my imagination to such a ——

Mrs. P. Oh! that is very easily obviated. We will, as this is merely a supposition so far as you are concerned, change the time: say in the morning, instead of the afternoon. And then, to make the affair appear still more natural, I would suggest, by way of episode, that, instead of going to Green's, — as of course you *do* each morning, — you go to the hotel.

Mr. S. (*Aside, greatly alarmed.*) It is evident that this woman knows all.

Mrs. P. Suppose that you and the widow —— (Now remember, that, when I say you, I mean Isaac. You must not forget this. I merely make the mutation, so that your sympathy for my sufferings may be more thoroughly secured.)

Mr. S. (*Aside, in despair.*) Oh, fool, fool, that I have

been! She knows it; Isaac knows it; my wife probably knows it; and probably everybody knows it!

Mrs. P. We will suppose ——

Mr. S. No more, Mrs. Pettigrew; no more! It is I, not you, who need advice. I have cruelly neglected a most affectionate wife. I see you know all; so throw aside this ambiguity, and speak boldly. Censure me as severely as you may, I shall deserve it all. But I — I can — can make reparation. I ——

Mrs. P. (*Greatly delighted.*) And you will? You — you are really penitent?

Mr. S. (*Humbly.*) As contrite as ever deviating man can be.

Mrs. P. Then I will after Nellie at once.

Mr. S. Yes, tell her that her husband sees his folly, and humbly asks to be forgiven; that perhaps, when he explains all, she'll find that her suspicions have been much heavier than his faults. Tell her that he loves his wife, and her only.

Mrs. P. Friend Stanford, I honor you. (*Exit*, L.D.)

Mr. S. (*Coming forward.*) Once more, I breathe again! The jewel! Oh, how I long to clasp her in these arms! I —— But here comes my lunatic friend; whom, for the present, I must avoid. (*Exit*, L.)

Enter Mr. PETTIGREW (R.D.).

Mr. P. He flies from me! Shall I after him? Shall I continue, or shall I not continue, to harass this depraved being, this Hierogabulous, this young ——

Enter JOHN, *with two letters* (C.D.).

John. Ah, Mr. Pettigrew! I'm glad 'tis you I've found. I have been after receiving two letters with your superstition on thim; which, being marked "In haste," and thinking as how they might be of importance, I hev fetched thim over to you.

Mr. P. (*Receiving letters*, R.C.) You did well, John.

John. Don't mintion it, sir. (*Exit*, C.D.)

Mr. P. (*Examining the superscription of one letter.*) My wife's hand? Yes! What can it be? (*Opens letter hurriedly.*) "INFALLIBLE AND ECONOMICAL CURE FOR THE

POTATO-ROT." Fortune, thou propitious female, I thank thee! I am a made man! The "Agriculturist" goes to press to-morrow! Visions of glory crowd my brain! (*Holds up receipt.*) "INFALLIBLE AND ECONOMICAL CURE FOR THE POTATO-ROT." (*Gazing at receipt.*) O thou precursor of my future greatness! come, let me read thee! But no: what have we here? (*Examines other letter.*) From Norton! Can it be from Squashby? Yes, it is his hand! (*Anxiously opens and reads letter.*)

"ISAAC H. PETTIGREW, Esq. Dear Sir, — It gives me infinite pleasure to inform you that lot number twenty-six, long sweets, contributed by you to our Annual Fair, has taken a first prize.

"Yours very respectfully,
"MELONIOUS P. SQUASHBY."

(*Rapturously.*) Oh exuberance of felicity! Incessant flow of beneficence! The first premium for long sweets! Oh ecstasy of joy! But where is Carrie? She must be in Jacob's study. (*Goes to* L.D.)

She shall share with me
This Elysian shower of the Fates' benignity.

But here come Mr. and Mrs. Stanford; and, as I live, as loving as two doves! (*Crosses* R. COR. *Enter Mr. and Mrs.* STANFORD, L.D.) Jacob, it gives me joy to see you once more in your true position. And now, Jacob, behold my magnanimity. For all the rough treatment, unkind words, base insults, and lacerating glances, which you this day have so copiously lavished upon me, — for all these, I forgive you, Jacob.

Mr. S. (*Smiling.*) Benevolent creature, accept my thanks!

Mrs. S. *Our* thanks, you mean, my dear.

Mr. P. Jacob, I am the happiest of living men! (*Crosses* L.)

Mr. S. Doubted! (*Kisses wife.*)

Mrs. S. (*Lovingly.*) Jacob!

Mr. P. Doubted, sir! Read that! (*Hands him letter.*) But where is Carrie? Where can she be? Where is my wife?

Mrs. S. A first premium for your acclimated sweets.

Enter Mrs. PETTIGREW, *unobserved* (L.D.).

Mr. P. (*Overjoyed.*) The same! And, in this hand, I hold another round of the ladder Fame; viz., "AN INFALLIBLE AND ECONOMICAL CURE FOR THE POTATO-ROT."

Mrs. P. (*Coming forward.*) Can't you read it?

Mr. P. Carrie!

Mrs. P. Isaac! (*They embrace*, L.) Read it, my dear. But no: we must first congratulate our friends on their happy re-union.

Mr. S. Madam, I cannot conceive how the most inconstant man should not succumb, when wrought upon by so ingenious a triangular corps as yourself, your eccentric husband, and my darling wife, — a trifid combination of method, drollery, and love. You have played well your parts, and I thank you for teaching me my duty. (*Embraces wife.*)

Mrs. S. Now, Mr. Pettigrew, the receipt.

Mr. P. Would you read it?

Mrs. P. By all means.

Mr. P. What say you, Jacob?

Mr. S. (*Pointing to audience.*) I think the ladies and gentlemen would like to hear it.

Mrs. S. (*Looking at watch.*) It is getting rather late.

Mr. P. (*Looking at his watch.*) So it is; but (*in lower voice*) I hardly like to read this receipt. There may be reporters here; for I have heard that they sometimes patronize the drama: and you know the proclivities of this fraternity.

Mrs. S. Possibly, to-morrow morning, we may all of us have reason to regret that they *do* sometimes patronize the drama.

Mr. P. (*Smiling.*) Exactly; for they say awful things occasionally. But, in regard to the infallible and economical, I prefer that it should make its first appearance in the "Agriculturist." However, our audiences always expect us to say something to them while *they are going out.*

Mrs. P. Why not solicit their —— (*Whispers to Mr. P.*)

Mr. P. An excellent idea! I will. (*Comes forward.*) Ladies and gentlemen, — I shall be happy to have you send in your orders for "*The Economical Agriculturist*," at your earliest convenience. It will be issued in morocco, cloth, and paper covers, and therefore will be within the reach of all.

It will be ready for delivery in about three weeks. It is to be a book which even the tiller of but a single acre, or the proprietor of a single cow, should possess. By sending in your orders early, you will greatly oblige ——

Mr. S. (*Interrupting.*) My Friend Isaac.

Disposition of the Characters at the Fall of the Curtain.

Mr. Stanford. *Mr.* Pettigrew.

(R.) *Mrs.* Stanford. *Mrs.* Pettigrew (L.).

THE END.

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